



House of Representatives

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT COALITION

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER—NOVEMBER 2013

TOP ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STORIES

- **Shutdown's Science Fallout Could Last for Years**—The shutdown's effects will linger for scientists studying everything from climate change to cancer. Antarctica-bound field researchers fret that decades of data on penguins and ice sheets will end up with a glaring gap, undercutting their documentation of global warming.
- **The House Shows It Can Unite by Passing Mammoth Water Bill**—The first Water Resources Development Act to clear the House since 2007 passed on a 417-3 vote, with opposition from just one Democrat and two Republicans.
- **Revival Planned for Energy-Efficiency Bill**—Senate leaders and industry groups have a plan to revive the energy-efficiency bill that stalled in the upper chamber last month amid a flurry of unrelated amendments.
- **West Coast States and BC to Link Climate Policies**—The governors of California, Oregon, Washington and the environment minister of British Columbia will place a price on greenhouse gas pollution and mandate the use of cleaner-burning fuels.
- **Supreme Court to Hear Challenge to EPA Rules on Gas Emissions**—The Supreme Court agreed to hear a major case challenging Environmental Protection Agency regulations of greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources like power plants. The justices declined to hear a variety of related attacks on the agency's authority to address climate change.
- **U.N. Agency Calls Outdoor Air Pollution Leading Cause of Cancer**—The air we breathe is laced with cancer-causing substances and should now be classified as carcinogenic to humans, the World Health Organisation's cancer agency said.

SEEC MEMBER LEGISLATION

Member Rep. Dr. Raul Ruiz (CA): *H.R. 3333, the Wildfire Prevention Act*

Bill Summary: Would allow states to receive up to an additional 15% of the total funds FEMA allocates for fire suppression to support wildfire-mitigation efforts, bringing wildfire mitigation grants in line with other natural disaster grants. This will help local authorities better respond to, prepare for, and mitigate the impact of future natural disasters.

SEEC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SEEC Stresses Value of Environmental Reviews—In a [letter](#) to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and its Subcommittee on Water Resources & Environment, 36 SEEC Members detailed how environmental reviews help to produce better, more cost-effective water infrastructure projects. During consideration of H.R. 3080, the Water Resources Reform and Development Act (WRRDA), 7 SEEC Members took to the House floor to reiterate this message: Vice-Chair **Rush Holt** (NJ); Member Reps. **Earl Blumenauer** (OR), **Mike Honda** (CA), **Brad Schneider** (IL), **Matt Cartwright** (PA), **Donna Edwards** (MD), and **Barbara Lee** (CA). Energy Task Force Chair Rep. **Jim Langevin** (RI) spoke in support of the National Ocean Policy.

WRRDA Amendment Successes—Several SEEC Member amendments made it into the House-passed WRRDA, including: an amendment by Climate Task Force Rep. **Scott Peters** (CA) to better disseminate emergency communication of risk to the public; an amendment by Rep. **Alan Lowenthal** (CA) to include expanded uses of the Harbor Maintenance Trust Fund in reports to Congress; and an amendment by Rep. **Brad Schneider** (IL) to expand reporting requirements to include recommendations for limiting the construction backlog. Mr. Schneider also cosponsored a successful bipartisan amendment to establish an effort to slow the spread of Asian carp.

Coalition Spearheads Effort to Remember Sandy—SEEC led an effort to remember the one-year anniversary of Superstorm Sandy as well as other extreme weather events. Co-Chair Rep. **Paul Tonko** (NY), Vice-Chair Rep. **Rush Holt** (NJ), Climate Task Force Chair Rep. **Scott Peters** (CA), and Member Reps. **Matt Cartwright** (PA) and **Denny Heck** (WA) [spoke for an hour](#) on the House floor. Other members who spoke during the day: Vice Chair Rep. **Doris Matsui** (CA); Member Reps. **Colleen Hanabusa** (HI), **Ed Perlmutter** (CO), and **Susan Davis** (CA).

Bipartisan Algae Caucus Launched—Climate Task Force Chair Rep. **Scott Peters** (CA) and Rep. Matt Salmon (AZ) launched the Congressional Algae Caucus to provide a forum to learn about and interact with the nascent algae industry.

Co-Chair Fires Back at GOP over Park Closures—Co-Chair Rep. **Paul Tonko** (NY) fired off tweets bashing the GOP for the closure of national parks after House Republicans announced plans to review allegations that the National Park Service prohibited access for political reasons.

TOP ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT FACTS

- ◆ **\$162 million:** Funding provided by the Department of the Interior for 45 storm-protection projects from North Carolina to New England.
- ◆ **\$420 billion:** Value of the 570 million metric tons of oil equivalent that energy efficiency measures saved in 11 nations from 2005 through 2010.
- ◆ **\$10 billion:** Value of the global market for energy storage systems due to the expected increased use of wind and solar.
- ◆ **44,000 years:** Last time that the average (averaged over a century) summer temperatures in the Canadian Arctic were this high.
- ◆ **1,000:** Average number of renewable energy patents filed each year. In contrast, between 1975-2000 the number was below 200 per year.

SEEC MEMBER TWEET OF THE MONTH

[Steve Israel @RepSteveIsrael](#): One year ago superstorm [#sandy](#) was barreling toward NY. A year later, we've rebuilt stronger. Still work to be done & I won't stop fighting.

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